

DATE: March 19, 2018

TO: Mayor Chelminiak, Deputy Mayor Robinson, and City Councilmembers

FROM: Joy St. Germain, HR Director, 452-4581
Human Resources Department

SUBJECT: Supported Employment Program

Summary:

The City of Bellevue's Supported Employment program was introduced as a citywide initiative in 2016 under the partnership between Human Resources and the Diversity Advantage Initiative. The City onboarded its first employee under this program from Puget Sound Personnel in October 2016. Since its inception, the City currently employs eight employees in six departments (City Attorney's Office, City Clerk's Office, Finance, Human Resources, Parks and Community Services, and Transportation). Supported employment positions have been customized to highlight the skillsets of these candidates while meeting the City's business needs and improving work efficiencies. Examples of work currently being performed by employees under this program include data entry, scanning documents, filing, and greeting customers.

Bellevue is a vibrant community because of its diversity. The City reflects a mix of cultures and backgrounds which have profoundly shaped Bellevue's identity and its comparative advantage to economically compete, offer top notch education, and offer many choices and opportunities for work, play and civic engagement. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2012-2016 American Community Survey indicates that 8.2 percent of Bellevue's population have disabilities. Approximately 38 percent of this group is comprised of individuals between 18-64 years of age. The core principle of Supported Employment programs is that individuals with disabilities have the right to be employed by community organizations where they can earn comparable wages, work together with colleagues with or without disabilities, and experience the same benefits as other employees.

Law and Policy:

The Americans with Disabilities Act ([ADA](#)) of 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability for employment. While the ADA has improved inclusion and access on many facets, gainful employment continues to be a barrier.

The Bellevue City Council's vision, "Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength," promotes inclusion and opportunities within the breadth of diversity. This

vision included the [Diversity Advantage Plan](#) and 60 recommendations. The Supported Employment program supports the following recommendations:

1. Strengthen and advance recruitment efforts of diverse staff to better reflect the City demographics.
2. Promote and support programs that offer employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment such as ability, age, and language.
3. Dovetail the City's existing accessibility and compliance programs (ADA, Section 504 and Title VI) with the Diversity Initiative to achieve similar goals of increased performance and outcomes across all City services.

Accolades:

- Honoree for the 2016-2017 Martin Luther King Jr. City Manager's Award
- Supported Employment Champions 2017 City of Bellevue Transportation Department Award from Puget Sound Personnel
- Nominee for the Governor's 2017 Employer of the Year by the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment

For additional information about the City's Supported Employment Program, please feel free to contact Kristin Headlee at the Human Resources Office at 425-452-7676.